(b) and (c) Orders for sanction of additional instalment of Dearness Allowance for Central Government employees and Dearness Relief for retired Central Government employees w.e.f. 1.1.2000 have since been issued. The DA/DR has been increased from 37% to 38% of basic pay/ pension w.e.f. 1.1.2000.

ECB approval norms

3307. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have made the norms for ECB approvals easy and fast;

(b) if so, the highlights thereof;

(c) by when it is likely to be implemented; and

(d) what is the total disbursement of ECB loans in the just ended financial year 1999-2000 along with the break-up of various sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. Government has been streamlining/simplifying External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) procedures in order to enable Indian corporates, to have easier access to international financial markets. Accordingly, among other changes, end-use restrictions have been relaxed and RBI has been empowered to give approval for loan amounts upto USD 10 million under various ECB schemes. The latest simplification of ECB policies has been effected vide this Department's Press Release dated 9.2.2000.

(d) As per available estimates, the details of sector-wise disbursements of ECB loans from 1st April, 1999 to 31st December, 1999 are as follows:—

(in Rs. Crores)

Sl. No.	Sector	Disbursement
1.	Public Corporations	1835.94
2.	Private Corporations	4860.28
3.	Financial institutions	545.66
	TOTAL	**7241.88**